

SECRET

Release 2006/09/29 : CIA-RDP79-00927A004200010005-2

6 September 1963

OCI No. 0296/63D

Copy No.

73

# SPECIAL REPORT

FRANCE REASSESSING POLICY TOWARD COMMUNIST CHINA?

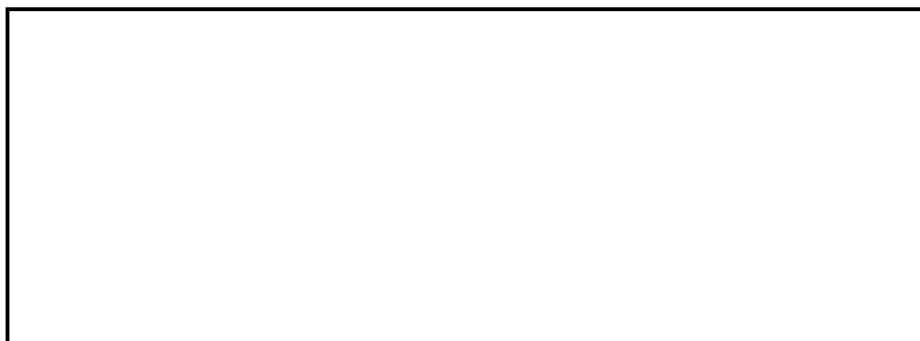
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

25X1

SECRET

GROUP 1 Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and declassification

THIS MATERIAL CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECT-  
ING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES  
WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE LAWS,  
TITLE 18, USC, SECTIONS 793 AND 794, THE TRANSMIS-  
SION OR REVELATION OF WHICH IN ANY MANNER TO  
AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW.



25X1

**SECRET**

6 September 1963

**FRANCE REASSESSING POLICY TOWARD COMMUNIST CHINA?**

Rumors are again current that De Gaulle is planning some new initiative with respect to Communist China as a way to rebuild French prestige in the wake of big-three negotiation to which France has not been a party. The rumors apparently stem from the circumstance that both France and China have opposed the nuclear test ban treaty, and reflect the long-standing French opinion that Peiping's participation would be essential for progress in any disarmament negotiations. France has consistently voted with the US against admitting Peiping to the UN, but French policy has not been rigid either on this issue or on the question of diplomatic relations, and Paris might now see some tactical advantages in revising both. The Chinese have shown no disposition to reciprocate any French overture, except possibly in the trade field. Under these circumstances, France would probably not wish to do more than make diplomatic gestures, particularly while Peiping remains adamant in its antipathy toward the so-called "two Chinas" solution.

De Gaulle Hedge on  
China Policy

After De Gaulle came to power in 1958, he indicated that he would support the US position on recognition of Communist China so long as it served French national interests. This hedged policy has proved fertile ground for recurrent rumors of an imminent French move toward closer relations with Peiping.

For several years, Peiping's recognition of the provisional Algerian government ruled out any

possibility of a change in French attitudes. Now that Algerian independence has removed this inhibition, there has been fresh speculation that De Gaulle might establish diplomatic ties and sponsor China's admission to the UN.

Foreign Ministry officials, however, continue to deny that France plans any new moves toward China "for the moment."

Policy Context Changing

The current revival of this question probably has been

**SECRET**

## **SECRET**

generated by France's isolation from recent Anglo-American negotiations with the USSR. There is a widespread expectation that De Gaulle will now see a need for a spectacular gesture demonstrating France's great-power status. De Gaulle himself may not be troubled by France's isolation, but many French officials are beginning to feel that it was a serious mistake to remain outside the Moscow negotiations on the test ban treaty. They are concerned that by so doing, Paris has ensured that its role in future negotiations of similar importance--such as on a nonaggressive pact or on the German problem--will be a limited or subordinate one.

In the circumstances, De Gaulle may conclude that the time has come for some further initiative to push into the center of international negotiations and to demonstrate France's independence. He may see the changing relationship between Moscow and Peiping as an opportunity to be exploited. In his 29 July press conference, De Gaulle expressed the intention of calling for disarmament talks by the four nuclear powers. France has always maintained that Peiping's participation would be essential to any serious disarmament negotiations, and De Gaulle may expect early developments to bring the disarmament question to a head.

Francis Perrin, commissioner of the French Atomic Energy Commission, reportedly believes that China already has a small bomb and will test it before December 1963 at the latest. Such advice as this presumably could only reinforce any conviction of De Gaulle's that it has become urgent to bring Peiping into the normal channels of diplomatic discussion.

### Possible Lines of Action

Certain Gaullist party officials have been identified as the source of a report that De Gaulle is reviewing France's China policy. French Foreign Ministry restrictions on diplomatic contacts with Chinese personnel have been released in Switzerland, although this change has apparently been made to facilitate trade relations. In late July, the head of the New China News Agency in Paris is reported to have suggested that France might recognize Peiping, but mentioned no date. Many segments of the French public would certainly view such a move favorably.

In any event, France has no desire to promote closer ties with Taipei. In late spring, Paris turned down the Nationalists' request to raise their representation, now at the

**SECRET**

chargé level, to the ambassadorial level.

There are also some indications that France might even take the initiative in seeking a solution to the problem of Peiping's admission to the United Nations. One official of the Elysee is reliably reported to have stated that De Gaulle plans to sponsor Peiping's admission before the end of 1963. Although the opposition to any change in the position was stiffer than usual in the last session of the General Assembly, French Foreign Ministry officials continue to maintain that the existing situation can only be a temporary one and that a new solution must be found.

The subject may come up in connection with the French proposal to enlarge the Security Council, a move increasingly under discussion in view of the increase in the size of UN membership in recent years. While the French Foreign Ministry probably has little expectation that such a proposal will be accepted, Paris can see a tactical advantage in having proposed such a change. The idea is popular with the African countries, including the Brazzaville group of former French colonies, whose support was largely responsible for Taipei's retention of its seat in the last session. The possibility cannot be dismissed that the

French might use the issue to discuss the China question, because a modification of the UN Charter would be required to expand the Council.

De Gaulle might be ready to take the initiative on the question if any wholesale shift in the vote of the Brazzaville group seemed likely. While this group does not want to see Taiwan excluded from the UN, its members have associated themselves with the view that it is "no longer possible to ignore the existence" of Peiping. Should they abstain this year on a resolution on Chinese representation, the pro-Peiping vote for the first time would come close to obtaining a majority. Moreover, in their current mood of indignation with the US in connection with the problems of the Portuguese territories and South Africa's racial policy, the African states, including the Brazzaville group, might be more susceptible to a French initiative on the Chinese representation issue.

Both Peiping and Taipei continue to reject any formula that would leave two Chinese states in the UN. De Gaulle may be tempted to use the issue as a means to call attention to the need to come to some sort of solution to the over-all China problem. Even if no immediate solution resulted, Paris might see some advantage in forcing a discussion of the issue.

## ***SECRET***

### Trade

A desire to expand Sino-French trade relations could be a minor additional factor prompting Paris to improve its relations with Peiping. Although French trade with Communist China has long been insignificant, both countries have shown some interest in expanding it. French firms have always been attracted by the Chinese market. Peiping has sent trade missions to France, but they have limited themselves to window-shopping and there is still no evidence that China has decided to make any purchases. China bought 500,000 tons of wheat from France in 1962 and will import about 700,000 tons in 1963. No contract has yet been signed for future imports of wheat from France, and imports of Canadian and Australian wheat (for which contracts have already been signed) could cause a drop in French sales.

A five-man private commercial mission will visit China in September with tacit government approval. It reportedly will again explore the possibility of establishing a permanent French trade representa-

tive in China. Despite China's imbroglio with the USSR, prospects for an appreciable expansion of Sino-French trade are not bright. While the French mission might succeed in placing some orders, trade will probably remain spotty and at a relatively low level. As long as De Gaulle is in power, commercial advantages will probably not be determining factors in any French decision on China.

### Outlook

At the present moment, De Gaulle has considerable flexibility in regard to new moves he could make with respect to Communist China. While the possibility of achieving lasting advantages from any policy innovation relating to Peiping depends almost entirely on the Chinese reaction, De Gaulle might see some short-range propaganda gain in initiating diplomatic moves which emphasized France's independence of the US and its influence. Even if the French take no immediate initiative, however, they can be expected to show increasing willingness to acknowledge Peiping's global importance.

25X1

\* \* \*

***SECRET***

***SECRET***

***SECRET***